

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-10, 12-17, 29 and 30 are pending herein.

By this Amendment, claims 18-28, 31 and 32 are canceled. Thus, no new matter is added by this Amendment.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration since the amendments merely cancel the rejected claims; (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; (d) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (e) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication that claims 1, 3-10, 12-17, 29 and 30 have been allowed.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 18-28, 31 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,480,202 (Deguchi) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,287,173 (Onuma) or EP 1251482 A2 (Yano). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 18-28, 31 and 32 are herein canceled. Thus, the rejection of these claims is now moot. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 3-10, 12-17, 29 and 30 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Linda M. Saltiel
Registration No. 51,122

JAO:LMS/acs

Date: January 6, 2005

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE
AUTHORIZATION
Please grant any extension
necessary for entry;
Charge any fee due to our
Deposit Account No. 15-0461